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WASHINGTON, D. C.

THE TOWER OF HARKSTONE CASTLE.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "PAUL PERKINS."

CHAPTER I.

On the rocky height of the sea-shores of Dorsetshire stands Harkstone Castle. It was inhabited some seven years ago by a very old man, who had been in possession nearly half a century, and during that time had never been known to a single person, except his own family. He was a very old man, and his name was Mr. Harkstone. He was a very old man, and his name was Mr. Harkstone. He was a very old man, and his name was Mr. Harkstone.

The probable contents of his will, then, excited great interest. The estate was wholly in his hands, and he had no near relations. He might leave it to his attorney, to the Queen, to his housekeeper, or he might turn Harkstone Castle into a hospital; he might have made no will at all, and the estate would have been divided among his children, or he might have made it over to his attorney, and the latter being to make inquiries into his nearest of kin. It was not difficult to find this person, though he was very much of an old man, and his name was Mr. Harkstone. He was a very old man, and his name was Mr. Harkstone.

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the corridor, or into another room. There was a heavy chair by the bed, thrown over and lying on its side; a small table, with a cup on it containing fragments of dry flowers. In one part of the room, on the floor, was a heap of old stuff, flung down, it should seem, on some day or night long left drawn back on the side of the bed were quite drawn back on the side next the window, and something dimly glittered then the light from the carpet, like an instrument or ornament of steel.

Charles impatiently looked at all, while the man worked away at the window bars; and when they yielded at last, he sprang in. There was little more to be learned with regard to these objects than what he had already made out. Only the clothes of the bed were thrown over the pillow, just as a heavy strong hand might replace them after they had been opened. Charles (Gruburn) flung them back as far as he could throw them. The inside of the bed was filled with a huge dark something, plainly it was a pool of blood.

Charles and the workman looked at each other in mute horror. The latter was the first to speak. "There's been foul work here, I doubt, sir," said he. "Rest cover it up, and say nothing." "Cover it up! Not I!" cried Charles. "I'll search it out to the very end. Who remembers the tower?"

"What! and alive still? Where is she?" "At the house in the forest, sir, where I have honor went to tell her of the master's legacy."

"I remember, I remember; she was very ill." "She'll never be no better, I'm of opinion to think. She's bound to die, she's money if she's dead."

"I'll see her this minute," cried Charles, resolving within himself that nobody should carry her the news of the discovery before he could see her. He went to the door, and he could judge of its effect upon her; and he could see her eyes to the window, and there he beheld, looking from a railroad fly, the face of Mr. Spoker, the attorney who had the care of his business.

"You will enjoy it the more," said Mr. Spoker. "All is left to the next of kin."

"You told to me. He wrote one will, leaving it to you by the name of Gruburn, with a y in the name, and another to his 'next of kin,' as if he would make it as sure as possible."

"So it is," said Charles. "Thank God," said Charles Gruburn, betraying that he had been more interested than he had allowed. Then, turning back to the mess room, he entered it, singing "I'd be a husband."

"What's happened to Charles now?" said his opponent, Frederick Palliser by name, who had been determining where to move his castle. "Charles turned upside down."

"He was here on Wednesday about six; it's all right. Do you want anything else, sir?" "I want to know if he is still in the castle, and if he is, what he is doing."

"The castle is a strange old place, and I want to know whether there are any hiding-places, any private rooms or passages, about it?" "I've never seen any of them, but I know they are there."

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"Horrible!" cried Charles, starting, and shuddering as he stood. "I could do nothing till Mr. Walter came back last night, but he said nothing went into that room, and he said nothing I could understand, but cries and groans like a speechless animal; and at last down the little stair he ran, and I following, just saw him disappear in the darkness, and not a word nor a sign to say where he was going. I was all of a tremble, and just turned back through the room, and dashed the clothes back over the bed, and ran out and looked the door, and never went in again, and Master Walter was not heard of as I knew of for years; but the old square was a strange man, and might have news of him without ever telling the like of us a word."

"I never heard anything of this," said Gruburn. "Not likely you should, sir. It was when she was an infant; and though I still call her a girl, she's sixty-six, if she's a day."

"When did he come back, then?" said Charles. "Long before the old square died, and that's five-and-forty years now since. He said nothing to me, nor I to him. It was just as if neither of us knew what the other was thinking of."

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"If you had let the lower alone till the architect came, said Mr. Spoker, "the old woman would have been dead by that time."

"Well, it's all over," said Charles. "I have made up my commission, that's one good thing, and she's dead, and I'm not to be troubled."

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"He was in haste to leave the scene of his short-lived fortune; but he waited for the sake of his own conscience, to be tried to her the change of her name. He returned to the cottage where the old woman's corpse lay, in the grand serenity of old age, upon the bed, and the form of the old man sat solitary by it."

"I don't know," said the old woman; "she's a big, strong, healthy creature, and grows worse and worse. But he's a bad man, and when the old square died, he gave me this cottage, and money enough yearly; and now I can understand perfectly well the legacy for her; for I am but a few days more from the grave, and I'm not to be troubled."

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the shop as well as anybody."

"Very true," said Charles, "but the money's gone back into the pocket of the old square."

"If you had let the lower alone till the architect came, said Mr. Spoker, "the old woman would have been dead by that time."

"Well, it's all over," said Charles. "I have made up my commission, that's one good thing, and she's dead, and I'm not to be troubled."

"Beside," said Mr. Spoker, "the girl's a fool, and can't make a will. She's old and unhealthy; you must come in before long and see her natural heir."

"You're right again!" said Charles, smiling. "No, thank you

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